



November 22, 2011

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Phil Isenberg, Chairman
Delta Stewardship Council
650 Capitol Mall, 5th floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Mokelumne River Salmon Returns & Delta Cross Channel Gate Closures

Dear Mr. Isenberg:

The East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) appreciates the continuing efforts of the Delta Stewardship Council to craft a thorough Delta Plan using an open and public process. We commend you and the other members of the Council for your efforts to understand a very complex system.

The Council's November 17th meeting included an informative discussion with Dr. Cliff Dahm, the Council's Lead Scientist, regarding salmon returns to the Central Valley streams. Dr. Dahm noted that returns this year were better than the last few years, and in the case of the Mokelumne River it was noted that the temporary closure of the Delta Cross Channel gates had a positive effect on the salmon returns. Council member Fiorini noted that all streams were showing increased returns and he inquired as to how much of the Mokelumne return could be attributed to the gate closure. Dr. Dahm noted that the gate closure helps to route the Mokelumne fish, but that he could not answer as to exactly how much of the increase could be attributed to the gate closure.

EBMUD agrees with Dr. Dahm's statement that the gate closures help to keep the fish from straying. The expected return this year is greater than 17,000 fish, which exceeds the maximum return since records were kept starting in 1940. EBMUD also agrees that Council member Fiorini's question is important, there is not yet sufficient information to quantify exactly how much the temporary gate closure helps. The temporary fall-run gate closures are experimental and it will take a number of years of data collection and analysis to more accurately quantify the impacts on fish returns. EBMUD supports the temporary closure of the gates during the fall-run to gather additional information and evaluate the impacts on returning fish. We also recognize the need to have a cooperative approach on gate operations to minimize water supply or water quality effects in the southern Delta that could result from gate closures during drier years.

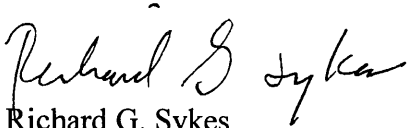
During the Council's discussion, it was mentioned that "EBMUD claims to lose water whenever the gates are closed." We would like to clarify that EBMUD has made no claim to that effect. As part of the Lower Mokelumne River Joint Settlement Agreement's (JSA) adaptive management provision, EBMUD in conjunction with the JSA Partnership that includes Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, did provide pulse flows into the Mokelumne River in October to help attract returning fall-run salmon. The gate closures occurred during these pulse flow periods, but EBMUD

Phil Isenberg
November 22, 2011
Page 2

does not assert any claim to lost water and considers the pulse flow releases within the intended purposes of the JSA management program and normal operations.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters. It is reassuring to know that the Council is striving to better understand Delta operations and fishery effects. If you have any questions about fishery programs on the Mokelumne River, please do not hesitate to contact me at (510) 287-1629.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard G. Sykes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being more prominent and the last name "Sykes" following in a similar style.

Richard G. Sykes
Director of Water and Natural Resources

RGS:PGS